

# Bihar Board Class 11 English Book Solutions Chapter 3 A Snake in the Grass

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## Bihar Board Class 11 English A Snake in the Grass Textual Questions and Answers

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A. Work in small groups and discuss these questions :

Question 1.

Have you ever seen a snake in your house/village ?

Answer:

Yes, I have seen a snake in our village

Question 2.

What was your reaction when you saw it ?

Answer:

I was scared.

Question 3.

How did other people of your family or village react to it ?

Answer:

Some of them stood still. Others said that it must be killed.

Question 4.

Did you kill the snake ? Why ?

Answer:

I did not kill it But another mt n killed it. He said it was dangerous and might bite someone.

B. 1. Answer the following questions briefly :

Question 1.

Why did the cyclist ring the bell ?

Answer:

The cyclist had seen a cobra getting into a bungalow. He rang the bell to warn the inmates to be careful.

Question 2.

Why did Dasa say, 'There is no cobra' ?

Answer:

Dasa said there was no snake because he did not like to be disturbed in his sleep. .

Question 3.

What happens when someone wakes you up and asks you to do something ?

Answer:

I feel irritated.

Question 4.

What fault did the people find with Dasa ?

Answer:

People said that Dasa was the laziest servant. He did not keep the surroundings tidy.

Question 5.

Do you find fault with the person who refuses to do what you want him to do ?

Answer:

Yes, I do.

Question 6.

What was Dasa's defence ?

Answer:

Dasa said he had been asking for a grasscutter for months but he did not get any. So he could not cut the grass.

Question 7.

What does 'with cynical air' mean ?

Answer:

Here this means that Dasa was not convinced that there was a cobra in the grass.

Question 8.

Why did the college-boy quote statistics ?

Answer:

He wanted to give an authentic proof that the cobra was deadly and it could bite and kill.

Question 9.

What made the mother nearly scream ?

Answer:

The mother was terrified. She was afraid that the cobra was sure to bite someone of her family.

B. 2. Answer the following questions briefly :

Question 1.

What made the old beggar happy ?

Answer:

The old beggar was happy because she considered the snake as God Subramanya. She said the householders were fortunate.

Question 2.

What did the beggar woman say ?

Answer:

She asked the householders not to kill the snake. She promised to send a snake-charmer to catch it.

Question 3.

Why did the snake-charmer look helplessly about ?

Answer:

The snake-charmer looked helplessly about because there was no snake in sight. He said he could catch the snake only if they showed it to him.

Question 4.

Why did they cut down all the plants and grass in the garden ?

Answer:

They cut down all the grass and plants in the garden so that the cobra had no place to hide itself.

Question 5.

Cite instances from the lesson which show the old mother's superstitious nature ?

Answer:

The mother agreed with the old beggar that the cobra was God Subramanya. She was repentant that she had forgotten all about the promised Abhishekam. She gave a coin to the beggar to get God's blessings. She also wished she had put some milk in a pot for the Cobra as a religious duty.

Question 6.

Did Dasa, in your opinion, really catch the cobra ?

Answer:

I don't think Dasa caught the cobra. He just pretended that the snake was in the pot. The cobra was seen coming out of a hole soon after Dasa had left with the pot.

Question 7.

What impression of Dasa do you get from this episode ?

Answer:

Dasa was an easy-going person. He shirked work. But he was quite clever at inventing stories and making excuses.

C. 1. Long Answer Questions :

### Question 1.

The neighbours who assembled to hear of cobra talk about several things. Make a list of the issues they touch upon. What does the conversation suggest about the people's reaction when danger strikes ?

Answer:

They talk about the laziness of Dasa.

They talk of scarcity of things during the war.

They talk about black-marketing.

The talk about the danger of snake-bite in the world.

The conversation suggests that when danger strikes, people like to blame someone. They think if Dasa had cut the grass, the cobra would not have come into the garden. Dasa tries to defend himself because he has not been given a grasscutter. Then the discussion shifts to war. They try to defend themselves by saying that they could not buy anything made of iron on account of war.

They then say how some people try to exploit the situation. They blame the merchants for indulging in black marketing and profiteering during scarcity of things. The college-boy gives statistics about number of deaths caused by snake-bite. He makes the danger appear really threatening. The conversation suggests that when danger strikes, people try to blame others. They look for scapegoats.

### Question 2.

How do you react when your parents chide you for neglecting your duties?

Answer:

When my parents chide me for neglecting my duty, I feel very bad. I don't confess that is way fault. Instead, I try to blame it on circumstances or some obstacles that hindered me from doing my duty. I try to blame someone or something.

### Question 3.

Read carefully the following utterances of Dasa:

'There is no cobra'.

'Where is the snake ?'

'I have caught him in this.'

'Don't call me an idler hereafter.'

What do these utterances tell about Dasa's character ?

Answer:

These utterances of Dasa show that he was a leisurely man who would not be provoked into doing something. He refused to believe that there was a snake, and when no snake was found, he said triumphantly, "Where is the snake ?" Still he felt that the inmates of the house

were still afraid that the snake was there. So he thought of a clever plan. He pretended to have caught the snake in a pot. He won the admiration of all. He asserted that he was not an idler.

He proved that he was an intelligent man and could achieve singlehandedly what they all together could not do. His plan had almost succeeded. But the cobra was seen, and luckily it went out of the gate and disappeared. Dasa must have asserted that he had actually caught a snake, and there must have been a couple of them in the garden.

Question 4.

Does the story throw any light on how people faced with sudden danger behave ?

Answer:

It is quite natural to be frightened if any sudden danger falls unexpectedly. This was the situation with the people who were present there. They became panick. In the situation of turmoil they began to charge over the servant dasa. They even made allegations on one-another for their being responsible in inviting danger. They suggested a number of opinions in connection with the danger. The mother became frightened and began to cry in a loud voice. Dasa was not showing any reaction. Inmates with the help of the neighbours cut grass and creepers with sharp knives and other weapons. They were jointly making effort to clean the compound where the cobra was hidden.

An old beggar woman appeared at the gate of the bungalow who asked for alms. On this the inmates told her to go away as they were busy in searching the cobra. .She advised them not to kill the cobra, as it was God Subramanya. The mother was convinced with the beggar woman's advise. The beggar promised to send a snake charmer. A snake charmer came to the place but he showed his inability because the cobra disappeared. He told them to inform him when the cobra appeared. Finally the cobra was seen coming out of the hole of compound wall.

Thus the behaviour of the people to see the sudden danger has been traced.

Question 5.

Narrate in brief the people attempt to catch the cobra.

Answer:

Hearing the news of the cobra neighbours gathered on the gate of the bungalow. They began to think any way to catch the cobra. The members of the family were worried. They shook the body of the servant Dasa, who was sleeping in a shed. Feeling disturbed he was annoyed and told that there was no cobra in the compound. The mother of the family child him and told him to catch the cobra before the evening. Everybody began to chide him for his slackness. The neighbours also charged him for not keeping the compound clean. He defended himself by saying that he had been asking to buy a grass cutter for a long time.

The inmates and neighbours began to talk about the grass-cutter. They told that the price of grass cutter was very high due to war at that time. The inmates with the help of the neighbours cleaned the grass and bushes with sharp knife and other weapons. The youngest son was a college boy who presented a data of casuality due to snake-bite which was 30,000 every year that means one person in every twenty minutes. The land lady cried out of fear. Meanwhile Dasa appeared there with a sealed water-pot. He put the pot down and told them that he had caught the cobra in the water I pot.

He put the water pot down and narrated the strategy he had employed to catch it. The land lady thanked him for his brave work. He told her that he was I going to hand over the cobra to a snake-charmer who was living nearby. Then the land lady poured some milk in the pot. Dasa walked off with the water pot to hand over it to the snake-charmer. Five minutes after the deprrture of Dasa the youngest son was a cobra coming out a hole in the compound. The cobra moved under the gate and disappeared along a drain.

Thus the story flashes light on the truth how the people made attempt to catch cobra.

Question 6.

Narrate in brief what the snake charmer tells about catching a snake.

Answer:

Hearing the news of cobra people gathered in the compound of the bungalow. They were very much fearful and talking about the way how the cobra would come out. Suddenly a snake charmer appeared. All the people gathered around him they began to request him to catch the cobra. He narrated so many stories of his bravery how he had caught the snake in adventurous way. The people gathered there pointed out the direction where cobra had gone. But the snake charmer showed his inability to catch the snake because the snake had been disappeared. He advised them to inform him and when the cobra appeared. Then only it could be possible to catch the snake.

C. 2. Group Discussion :

Discuss the following in groups or pairs:

Question a.

Giving milk to snake is a religious duty. Do you agree ? Give reasons in favour of your argument

Answer:

Many people in India consider the cobra as a holy creature. It is associated with Lord Shiva. It is always garlanded around his neck. Some people consider it a pious duty to give milk to a cobra. But I think it is no religious duty. Those very people who worship the cobra are likely to be frightened when they come across one in their homes or in a jungle. Many will think of killing it. In our country and elsewhere snakes are killed at first sight, Of course, some of the snakes are poisonous and can kill a human in no time. Still, we can do a religious duty to

them. No doubt we should protect ourselves from snake, but we should not kill them. They are a part of our ecology and hold an important position in food-chain. They eat rats and frogs. Milk is not their natural food.

Question b.

For every danger or calamity we tend to find a scapegoat. Do you subscribe to this view ? Give examples from the life around you.

Answer:

Answer:

I fully subscribe to the view that for every trouble we tend to find a scapegoat. Whenever something goes wrong and harms us all, we are likely to blame someone weak and defenceless. There have been a number of railway accidents. In most cases it was ascribed to human failure. And the man who failed to do his duty was a poor signal man. In such a big whose failure causes accidents ? But someone has to be blamed to let other go scot-free. If it is not a human being, it is some natural or abstract thing. It may be darkness, sudden rains and storms, or God Himself who is the scapegoat. We are often heard to say, "It was bad luck that caused it," or "it was an act of God".

Few have the courage to say, "I am responsible for it."

(c) Story telling is an effective way of teaching.

Answer:

From time immemorial people have been telling and listening stories. Stories are fascinating, entertaining and informative. Every culture has its own folktales that have come down from generation to generation. Our great teachers realised that teaching something becomes far easier through stories. That is why our purans are full of stories. We know how panchatantra came into being. A king's sons were so mischievous that no teacher could teach them. Then a great teacher, Vishnu Dutta, invented a new technique. He told them stories that contained great wisdom. Those stories are still read and enjoyed. One can seldom forget an interesting story and is sure to learn the wisdom contained in it. A good teacher makes his teaching more effective and more interesting by telling stories.

C. 3. Composition :

Question a.

Write an essay in not more than 200 words on how superstitions influences lives in our society.

Answer:

Superstitions Influence our Lives

No matter Which part of the world you tour, you will find the natives nurturing certain beliefs and superstitions and India is no exception in this case. Though the Indian society is fast progressing, there are many people who are still superstitious and have a strong faith in

the local beliefs. While some of them are quite hilarious, few are really interesting, as many aspects of life are linked to them.

The standard viewpoint is that most of the Indian beliefs and values have sprung with an objective to protect from evil spirits, but some were based on scientific reasoning. With the passage of time, the reasoning part behind the origin of these cultural beliefs and superstitions got eroded. That is exactly why most of these beliefs appear unsubstantiated and false. However, in reality, there are many such beliefs in the Indians culture which are absolutely absurd and have no logic behind them.

Superstitions are deemed as pertinent in India because these, generally, hint at future occurrences and can be either good or bad. Thus, anything from the call of a bird to the falling of utensils is considered an omen in India.

Similarly, other auspicious signs could be cawing of a black crow in one's house, as it forecasts the arrival of guests. Seeing a peacock on a journey is also considered lucky, but hearing its shrill sound is bad. Indians feel happy if a sparrow builds a nest in a new house because it signals good fortune. A very old belief is that if you kill a cat, you have to offer one in gold to a priest. This belief or superstition was concocted by the priests to protect the cats which are useful in killing the rats in people's houses.

Indians often consult astrological charts to fix an auspicious time for things. Even the daily life of Indians is governed by beliefs and superstitions. For example, Monday is not an auspicious day for shaving and Thursday is a bad day for washing one's hair.

Question b.

Write a paragraph in about 100 words on the art of snake-charming,

Answer:

Snake charming

Snake-charming is the practice of apparently hypnotising a snake by . simple playing an instrument. A typical performance may also include handling the snake or performing other seemingly dangerous acts, as well as other street performance staples, like juggling and sleight of hand. The practice ' is most common in India, though it is also prevalent in other Asian nations. Many snake-charmers live a wandering existence, visiting towns and villages on market days and during festival. With a few rare exceptions, however, they typically sit out of biting range, and his animal is sluggish and not inclined to attack anyway.

More drastic means of protection include removing the creature's fangs or venom glands, or even sewing the snake's mouth shut. The most popular species are house natives to the snake-charmer's home region, typically various kinds of cobras, though vipers and other types are also used.

D. Word-Study :

D. 1. Dictionary Use :

Ex. 1. Correct the spelling of the following words:

<b>bunglow</b>	<b>gret</b>	<b>distense</b>	<b>dredfull</b>
<b>impliment</b>	<b>mumer</b>	<b>neighbour</b>	<b>sieze</b>
<b>eloqent</b>	<b>baggar</b>	<b>dieing</b>	

Answer:

<b>bunglow</b>	<b>great</b>	<b>distance</b>	<b>dreadful</b>
<b>implement</b>	<b>murmer</b>	<b>neighbour</b>	<b>seize</b>
<b>eloquent</b>	<b>beggar</b>	<b>dying</b>	

Ex. 2. Look up a dictionary and write two meanings of each of the following words—the one in which it is used in the lesson and the other which is more common:

<b>Swear</b>	<b>Chant</b>	<b>Glare</b>	<b>Cover</b>
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Repair</b>	<b>Knock</b>	<b>Watch</b>

Answer:

Swear: (i) (Here) force to follow a certain course of action.

(ii) a Promise

Chant: (i) (Here) spoke in a sing-song way

(ii) to spell

Glare: (i) bright light

(ii) stare in an angry way

Cover: (i) to extend over

(ii) to overlay

Measure : (i) means to end

(ii) size, limit, unit of capacity

Repair: (i) (Here) to go

(ii) to mend

Knock: (i) to strike with a blow

(ii) collide with

Watch: (i) look at attentively  
(ii) a small time-piece

#### D. 2. Word-formation :

Look at the following examples :

The inner walls brightened with the unobstructed glare.

The snake disappeared along the drain.

You see that in the first example prefix 'un' is added with 'obstructed' which is Past Participle but is used there as an Adjective. In the second example, prefix 'dis' is added to a verb. In both the cases we get the opposite meaning.

Ex. 1. Use 'un'—and 'dis' suitably before each of the following words and use them in sentences of your own. The first one is done for you.

liked – disliked – Naghaz disliked getting up early.

<b>obeyed</b>	<b>crowned</b>	<b>solved</b>	<b>believed</b>
<b>changed</b>	<b>connected</b>	<b>decided</b>	<b>announced</b>
<b>agreed</b>	<b>noticed</b>	<b>qualified</b>	

Answer:

obeyed – disobeyed – He disobeyed his parent.

crowned – uncrowned – The Prince remained uncrowned.

solved – dissolved – The Governor dissolved the assembly.

believed – disbelieved – She disbelieved the incident.

changed – unchanged – Our programme is still unchanged.

connected – disconnected – The wireman disconnected the line.

decided – undecided – The programme is still undecided.

announced – unannounced – The date of examination is unannounced

agreed – disagreed – They disagreed with us.

noticed – unnoticed – The snake remained unnoticed

qualified – unqualified – He was unqualified person.

#### D. 3. Word-meaning :

Ex. 1. Match the words given in Column-A with their meanings given in Column-B:

**Column-A**

**One of a number of persons living together  
rest or sleep in the early afternoon  
person who does not work  
forceful and fluent in speech  
plan and method used to achieve a goal  
bright and sunlight  
everything around and about a place  
cut roughly by blows**

**Column-B**

**idler  
surroundings  
hack  
sunny  
siesta  
eloquent  
strategy  
inmate**

Answer:

**Column-A**

**One of a number of persons living together  
rest or sleep in the early afternoon  
person who does not work  
forceful and fluent in speech  
plan and method used to achieve a goal  
bright and sunlight  
everything around and about a place  
cut roughly by blows**

**Column-B**

**inmate  
siesta  
idler  
eloquent  
strategy  
sunny  
surroundings  
hack**

D. 4. Phrases :

Ex. 1. Read the lessons carefully and find out the sentences in which the following phrases have been used. Then use them in sentences of your own:

swear at – drop in – beat about the bush

ask for – send for – butt in

Answer:

Sentences from the lesson:

They swore at him and forced him to take an interest in the cobra.

Some neighbours dropped in.

I have been asking for a grass-cutter for months.

The fellow is beating about the bush, someone cried aptly.

At this point the college-boy of the house butted in with .....

The moment you see it again, send for me.

Sentences with the use of the said phrases:

I swore at the worker and forced him to complete the work soon.  
When I was ready to go out, some guests dropped in.  
We have been asking for increment for months.  
They were beating about the bush to find out the snake.  
We were discussing the topic when the teacher butted in.  
If you need any help, send for me.